





greater angle-wing
Microcentrum rhombifolium



Texas bush katydid
Scudderia texensis























Pictures and Stories from the Banks of the Ol' Guajolote



















































Roasting the Big One

If you have but one oven and a long guest list for Thanksgiving, only a gargantuan turkey will do. Here's what we learned about successfully roasting "the big one."

BY SALLY SAMPSON

Most food magazines, including this one, suggest roasting 12- to 14-pound turkeys, a size that is easy to handle and that delivers, according to many tasters, superior flavor. But what if you have more than 10 people coming to dinner? Roasting two turkeys is not an option for most home cooks. This "silent majority"—of which I am one—opts for the massive bird to feed the multitudes because we have but one oven to dedicate to the turkey. Welcome to real home cooking.

Working with a 20-pound plus bird has its drawbacks. How was I to find a container large enough for brining, a technique that our test kitchen finds essential to great Thanksgiving turkey? I was also concerned about turning the bird in the oven, another important step to turkey perfection. This pumped-up Tom was going to be hot, heavy, and dangerous to move halfway through roasting. Uncompromising in my goals, however, I still wanted the Norman Rockwell picture of perfection: a crisp, mahogany skin wrapped around tender, moist meat.

My first step was to select the right brand at the



A no-fuss roasting yields a tender, moist bird.

this weight. I tried yet another turkey, with the same combination of high and low heat, but I kept the turkey breast-side up the entire time. It was slightly inferior to the turned bird but still good enough to eat, so those not up to the task can skip this step. (I also tried this same method breast-side down, and the skin turned out mottled and undercooked.)

Although I had opted not to stuff the bird, I wondered if a simple aromatic mix in the cavity might add flavor to the meat. I started with the classic onion, carrot, and celery combination, and, while this turkey was better, something was still missing. Lemon added freshness to the meat closest to the bone and gave the pan juices a cleaner taste. Sprigs of fresh thyme added the scent of Thanksgiving. More vegetables went into the roasting pan to flavor the drippings. I added a little water to ensure that the vegetables didn't dry out.

After roasting trussed and untrussed

kosher turkey, which is essentially brined by the koshering process. All the tasters preferred Butterball for its juicier meat. The kosher came in second, and the organic turkey took place because the meat was dry. If you prefer a frozen, injected bird, get a kosher bird.

Thirty-five turkeys later, I had come up with a simple method that turns out a superb Thanksgiving turkey for a crowd with a minimum of fuss. Yes, I opted for a frozen Butterball, because bird looked just like one from a Norman Rockwell Thanksgiving, and it tasted good, too.

TURKEY FOR A CROWD

SERVES 20 TO 24

You can use any roasting pan to roast a turkey, even a disposable one, but make use of a V-rack to keep the bird clean. Use a wire V-rack to dry the skin thoroughly before trussing the bird with butter; otherwise it will have brown skin. Rotating the bird helps to keep the meat moist, evenly cooked meat, but for convenience, you may opt not to rotate it. In the step of lining the V-rack with foil, turn the bird breast-side up for the entire roasting time. Because we do not brine the bird, we use results with a frozen Butterball (meat, fat, and water) and a kosher bird (water only during processing). See Kitchen Notes for tips on defrosting a frozen turkey.

2 medium onions, chopped

2 medium carrots, chopped

2 stalks celery, chopped

























































































**No
Overnight
Camping**

**Bear
Country**

Avoid Confrontation
Don't surprise bears
- make noise
- keep a distance of **100 feet**
In groups of at least three

Odors Attract

-Keep camp clean

-Don't leave food in camp

-Store food in bear-proof containers

-Don't leave trash unrefuse

-Don't store as you go

-Don't feed them

Dogs Antagonize Bears

-Leash your pet.





The End

